

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. An image processing apparatus characterized by comprising:

5 a determiner for determining whether image data contains specific information for at least one block extracted from the image data; and

an image processor for executing predetermined processing for the image data which is determined by said
10 determiner to contain the specific information.

2. The apparatus according to claim 1, characterized in that the specific information is predetermined image data, and said determiner performs the determination on the basis of at least the one block and the predetermined image data.

15 3. The apparatus according to claim 2, characterized in that said determiner comprises a detector for detecting, from entire image data, position information related to a position where the specific information is contained, and determines whether the specific information is contained
20 on the basis of the position information detected by said detection means.

4. The apparatus according to claim 3, characterized in that

said detector detects the information related to the
25 position using position detection image data obtained by decreasing resolution of the image data, and

said determiner determines presence/absence of the specific information from the image data.

5 5. The apparatus according to claim 1, characterized by further comprising an image scanner for generating the image data.

6. The apparatus according to claim 1, characterized in that the image data is image data for printing.

7. The apparatus according to claim 6, characterized by further comprising a printer for printing the image data.

10 8. The apparatus according to claim 1, characterized in that said processor executes processing of converting density or brightness of the image data as the predetermined processing.

15 9. The apparatus according to claim 1, characterized in that said processor erases the image data as the predetermined processing.

20 10. The apparatus according to claim 1, characterized in that the block has the same size as that of a block having a predetermined size as a unit of image data transfer in said image processing apparatus.

25 11. The apparatus according to claim 10, characterized in that said determiner comprises detection means for detecting, from entire image data, position information related to a position where the specific information is contained, specifies at least the one block from the image data on the basis of the position information detected by

said detection means, and determines for at least the one block whether the specific information is contained.

12. The apparatus according to claim 1, characterized in that the block is a band obtained by segmenting the image data along a direction of a line of pixels.

13. The apparatus according to claim 12, characterized in that the band is a block obtained by segmenting the image data at a line having uniform color and density.

14. An image processing method characterized by comprising:

the determination step of determining whether image data contains specific information for at least one block extracted from the image data; and

the image processing step of executing predetermined processing for the image data which is determined in the determination step to contain the specific information.

15. The method according to claim 14, characterized in that the specific information is predetermined image data, and the determination step comprises performing the determination on the basis of at least the one block and the predetermined image data.

16. The method according to claim 15, characterized in that the determination step comprises the detection step of detecting, from entire image data, position information related to a position where the specific information is contained and comprises determining whether the specific

information is contained on the basis of the position information detected in the detection step.

17. The method according to claim 16, characterized in that

5 the detection step comprises detecting the information related to the position using position detection image data obtained by decreasing resolution of the image data, and

the determination step comprises determining
10 presence/absence of the specific information from the image data.

18. The method according to claim 14, characterized by further comprising the image read step of generating the image data.

15 19. The method according to claim 14, characterized in that the image data is image data for printing.

20. The method according to claim 19, characterized by further comprising the image formation step of printing the image data.

20 21. The method according to claim 14, characterized in that the image processing step comprises executing processing of converting density or brightness of the image data as the predetermined processing.

22. The method according to claim 14, characterized in
25 that the image processing step comprises erasing the image data as the predetermined processing.

23. The method according to claim 14, characterized in that the block has the same size as that of a block having a predetermined size as a unit of image data transfer.

24. The method according to claim 23, characterized in
5 that the determination step comprises the detection step of detecting, from entire image data, position information related to a position where the specific information is contained, and comprises specifying at least the one block from the image data on the basis of the position information
10 detected in the detection step and determining for at least the one block whether the specific information is contained.

25. The method according to claim 14, characterized in that the block is a band obtained by segmenting the image
15 data along a direction of a line of pixels.

26. The method according to claim 25, characterized in that the band is a block obtained by segmenting the image data at a line having uniform color and density.

27. A computer program executed by a computer to perform
20 image processing, characterized by comprising:

a program code of the determination step of determining whether image data contains specific information for at least one block extracted from the image data; and

25 a program code of the image processing step of executing predetermined processing for the image data which

is determined in the determination step to contain the specific information.

28. The program according to claim 27, characterized in that the specific information is predetermined image data,
5 and the program code of the determination step comprises performing the determination on the basis of at least the one block and the predetermined image data.

29. The program according to claim 28, characterized in that the determination step comprises a program code of the
10 detection step of detecting, from entire image data, position information related to a position where the specific information is contained and comprises determining whether the specific information is contained on the basis of the position information detected by the
15 program code of the detection step.

30. The program according to claim 29, characterized in that

the program code of the detection step comprises detecting the information related to the position using
20 position detection image data obtained by decreasing resolution of the image data, and

the program code of the determination step comprises determining presence/absence of the specific information from the image data.

25 31. The program according to claim 27, characterized by further comprising a program code of the image read step

of generating the image data.

32. The program according to claim 27, characterized in that the image data is image data for printing.

33. The program according to claim 32, characterized by
5 further comprising a program code of the image formation step of printing the image data.

34. The program according to claim 27, characterized in that the program code of the image processing step comprises
10 executing processing of converting density or brightness of the image data as the predetermined processing.

35. The program according to claim 27, characterized in that the program code of the image processing step comprises erasing the image data as the predetermined processing.

36. The program according to claim 27, characterized in
15 that the block has the same size as that of a block having a predetermined size as a unit of image data transfer.

37. The program according to claim 36, characterized in that the program code of the determination step comprises
20 a program code of the detection step of detecting, from entire image data, position information related to a position where the specific information is contained, and comprises specifying at least the one block from the image data on the basis of the position information detected by the program code of the detection step and determining for
25 at least the one block whether the specific information is contained.

38. The program according to claim 27, characterized in that the block is a band obtained by segmenting the image data along a direction of a line of pixels.

39. The program according to claim 38, characterized in
5 that the band is a block obtained by segmenting the image
data at a line having uniform color and density.

40. A computer-readable storage medium which stores the computer program of claim 27.